



1. Objective

The objective of the Abbotsford Juniors Football Club (AJFC) Fair Playing Time Policy (Policy) is to provide guidelines for team coaches and managers on AJFC's stance on "fair playing time in games".

2. Scope

The Policy applies to all teams registered with AJFC to play in regular Winter and Summer season competitions.

3. Principles of "Fair Playing Time"

All players who are members of an AJFC team are entitled to fair playing time in matches throughout a season. This equates to ensuring that players have an equal opportunity to play and participate in the game.

AJFC regards a player's entitlement to fair playing time to be based upon:

- Participation in all aspects of the team; and
- Displaying respect for other players and the team coaches and managers.

Players and their parents and guardians should not view the game as the only part of the team's activities that matter. Players are expected to attend training regularly, attend games, be willing to play in different positions, and arrive at the ground punctually to participate in pre-match activities.

4. "Fair Playing Time" for Mini-Roos age groups (U6 and U7)

The emphasis for Mini-Roos football is non-competitive skill development and player enjoyment. Every team member who attends the game should receive approximately equal playing time in that game.

5. "Fair Playing Time" for Winter Season non-competitive age groups (U8 to U12)

The emphasis in Winter Season non-competitive age groups is on skill development and player enjoyment, every team member who is registered on the match sheet and attends the game should receive approximately equal playing time in that game (noting the exception below for Academy teams).

Parents and players should understand that a willingness to participate in training and games and to play in different positions is a requirement to receive approximately equal playing time.



5 A. Academy Teams in Winter Season non-competitive age groups (U8 to U12)

Academy teams at AJFC play at the highest divisional level for the Club. Coaches have increased discretion to vary playing time by game in accordance with the level of the opposing team. This may mean that a player(s) may receive lower game time for an individual game.

It is a requirement that coaches and managers of Academy teams work to ensure that team members who are registered with the team and attend training and games on a regular basis, receive approximately equal playing time in games across the course of the season.

Under no circumstances should a player attending a game and prepared to play receive no playing time.

6. "Fair Playing Time" for Winter Season competition age groups (U13 and Over)

For teams in the Winter Season competition age groups, each player should receive approximately equal playing time over the course of the Home and Away portion of the season. This may or may not translate to equal playing time in each individual game.

Team coaches retain discretion to consider the following factors (in no particular order or weighting) when selecting a team and managing substitution of players during a game.

- i. Commitment
- ii. Enthusiasm
- iii. Self-Motivation
- iv. Keenness to improve and learn
- v. Willingness to play in different positions
- vi. Fitness, illness and/or injuries
- vii. Football skill level
- viii. Attendance and attitude at training
- ix. Attendance and attitude at games
- x. Punctuality at games
- xi. Ability to be coached and take instruction
- xii. Playing conditions on the day



- xiii. Whether a player notifies the coach in advance if he or she is unable to comply with any of the above

Under no circumstances should a player attending a match and prepared to play receive no playing time.

7. “Fair Playing Time” for Winter Season Finals Series (U13 and Over)

Playing time for each player is at the discretion of the coach given the unique nature of finals games. Coaches are encouraged to give all players reasonable participation in each game, however circumstances may not allow for this and a “what is best for the team” approach should be the coach’s priority.

Under no circumstances should a player attending a finals match and prepared to play receive no playing time.

The exception is where this is by mutual prior agreement with the player (and their parents when the player is aged 18 years or younger). For example, where an injury or illness prevents a player from active participation, a player may be included in the team for participation purposes but take no active part in the game.

8. “Fair Playing Time” for Summer Season football (All age groups)

For teams in Summer Season competition, each player should receive approximately equal playing time over the course of the season. This may or may not translate to equal playing time in each individual game.

Under no circumstances should a player attending a match and prepared to play receive no playing time.

9. “Fair Playing Time” for Goalkeepers

Ensuring fair playing time for goalkeepers has special considerations given the specialised nature of the playing position within a team. The following guidelines should be followed by coaches in relation to the goalkeeper position.

9 A. Teams without a dedicated Goalkeeper

Coaches of teams without a dedicated goalkeeper should seek to ensure that time in the goalkeeper position is shared approximately equally amongst the team’s players over the course of the season.

In principle, each player should be prepared to take their turn as a goalkeeper irrespective of interest or ability unless there is a genuine reason for them not to do so.



9 B. Teams with one part-time Goalkeeper

Coaches of teams with one player who is motivated and agrees to being a part-time goalkeeper should ensure that they play no more than 50% of each game in goal unless this is varied by prior discussion and agreement with the player (and their parents when the player is aged 18 years or younger).

Coaches should work to ensure that the remaining 50% of game time in the goalkeeper position is shared approximately equally amongst the remaining players over the course of the season.

Every remaining player should be prepared to take their turn as a goalkeeper irrespective of interest or ability.

For clarity, part-time goalkeepers have a right to play in the outfield during the season. Coaches should seek to balance this with the requirement to ensure "Fair Playing Time" for all other team players.

9 C. Teams with more than one part-time Goalkeeper

Coaches of teams with more than one player who is motivated and agrees to being a part-time goalkeeper should ensure approximately equal playing time over the course of the Home and Away season in the goalkeeper position.

Where possible, coaches should work to ensure that any remaining game time in the goalkeeper position is shared equally amongst the remaining players over the course of the season.

For clarity, part-time goalkeepers have a right to play in the outfield during games. Coaches should seek to balance this with the requirement to ensure "Fair Playing Time" for all other team players.

9 D. Teams with a dedicated Goalkeeper(s)

Coaches of teams with a dedicated goalkeeper(s) can manage time playing in the goalkeeper position as appropriate to the team's need.

10. Implementation of the Policy

Team coaches should adhere to the elements and principles outlined in the Policy. Coaches retain discretion as to how they implement this policy with the team throughout the season and for individual games.

11. Complaints

Player and/or parent complaints about "Fair Playing Time" under this policy should be discussed firstly with the coach and manager of the team.

If the issue is not addressed, then please contact Abbotsford Junior Football Club at mpio@abbotsfordjuniorsfc.com.au.



Details of the AJFC Complaints Handling Process can be found by referencing the **AJFC Member Protection Policy**.

12. Changes to this Policy

AJFC reserves its right to make changes to this Policy at any time.

13. Contacting AJFC

Abbotsford Juniors Football Club welcomes comments, feedback and questions on this Policy. These can be submitted to AJFC by email: info@abbotsfordjuniorsfc.com.au.

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